Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

"It is difficult to make a man miserable while he feels he is worthy of himself and claims kindred to the great God who made him."

— Abraham Lincoln (August 14, 1862).

Volume XI **FEBRUARY 1960** Number 1

OUR PURPOSE

"To promote the practice of prayer among *all* religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind."

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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Volume XI February, 1960 Number 1

TEN YEARS, THANK GOD

Fellowship in Prayer was conceived in and born out of the great mind of our beloved founder and friend—Carl Allison Evans. A seed was implanted into the mind of Carl Evans by God; it took root and by the grace of God it has grown and flourished and become an outstanding, powerful influence for good the world around. There are many other publications much larger than our own, but none of higher character.

Fellowship in Prayer has made great progress during these ten years, but the world will never know the heartaches and the headaches, the sacrifices and the suffering which made this possible. The road to attainment is long and steep and rough. It is only through struggle that we unfold and grow and fulfill our mission. There is no easy way into the Kingdom of Heaven; we cannot circumvent the obstacles we have built up in our own pathway through our transgressions of the laws of God, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I am profoundly grateful to God for having directed me to read Mr. Evans' original "AD" in THE NEW YORK TIMES on December 12, 1949. These ten years have been the most joyous and the most enriching and the most rewarding period of my life. To work with Fellowship in Prayer from the very beginning has been an experience of inexpressible joy and fruitfulness; a truly great privilege which has helped me to become a more efficient server in the service of the Master and my unceasing prayer is that I might "grow daily in grace and in the knowledge of God and of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ" that I might, in turn, make my life more useful, more helpful and more fruitful, day by day, in the service of my fellow creatures.

— Harry Halsey Starrett.

REAFFIRMATIONS

By Kathryn G. Brown

"Volume XI, Number 1" means: A full decade is now behind FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. It was a decade of trials and thrills in the little Office H, where the manuscripts of each number of the ten volumes were assembled, edited, and gotten ready for press work, where the finished copies were enveloped or parceled, addressed, and made ready for mailing, where the accounts were kept, and where the correspondence of both the publication and the organization was conducted.

It was of course trying to work in the limited space of a few square yards, in poor light and with poorer air. It was more of a trial when some of the mechanical aids failed to respond to need—especially when the Vari-Typer had to break down now and then. Such discomforts and annoyances were, however, hardly comparable to the mental anguish that occasionally arose when the amount of work threatened the working schedule, when words did not seem to express adequately the thought, or when thoughts did not seem to encompass fully the problem. And the worst was those moments of fleeting disappointment when a communication from a dear relative or an esteemed friend seemed to imply that we were wasting our life in a needless sacrifice on an impractical project and for a hopeless cause or those moments of fleeting doubt when the delay in the solution of a difficulty might be a reflection on the efficacy of prayer or on the rightness of our way of praying.

Yet, the very fact that we have been enabled to have carried the work for ten years although at several critical junctures during the period it was apparently easier to fold up for good, is it not a proof that God has not been unheedful to the prayers of the few more closely, and of the many less closely, connected with the work? And, although the work has been burdened with hardship, it has also been blessed with joy. The assurance that is is not an erroneous undertaking and need not be abandoned is itself a source of joy. What a joy to be able to claim as friends so many men and women who are wiser and abler than we are! What a thrilling joy to open a letter, assuring support and cooperation or enclosing an article or a poem exactly of the

kind we are proud to publish! What an overwhelming joy to read a letter informing us that this or that piece in our publication has been a source of comfort or of inspiration or, as in a few cases, of beginnings in healing! We thank God: Inadequate and unworthy although we are our efforts have not been fruitless.

At the beginning of a new decade, we reaffirm, therefore, our purpose: To promote the practice of prayer. The grace of God and the generosity of friends have enabled us to begin the new decade in a new office at the same address, a larger room with better light and fresher air. While this change is a matter for rejoicing, we regret that our Editor, Mr. Paul Hourihan, for reasons of health, is on leave of absence. So, the life of a group is like that of an individual—made up of ups and downs. The future of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER'S work in prospect will be perhaps like its past in retrospect—full of trials and thrills. Dare we hope that the trials will decrease and the thrills increase? At any rate, we make bold to expect that the new decade will bear more fruits than those of the past.

We reaffirm our expectation that mankind's future will be better and brighter if all believers in God, irrespective of race, color, or creed, will pray and pray, with or without words, but always with love in adoration and gratitude. We reaffirm our belief that the constant practice of prayer will enable a religious person to understand better his Bible, Koran, sutra, or any other scripture and to help better his church, synagogue, temple, or any other communion in the appointed task of salvation. We reaffirm our conviction that religion is the key to the solution of all the evils that afflict the present world. When one approaches the Heavenly Father in love and humility, can he hate or ignore God's other children, his brothers? When he says from the depth of his heart "Thy will be done," can he refuse to support democracy to maintain justice, world order to ensure peace, or any other institution for the betterment of the common lot?

These reaffirmations contain no new concepts. It was these same ideas that led Carl A. Evans to found our organization and publication. What a struggle he had to find only a few to share his task! Were he here with us today how

he might be overjoyed to be able to write to the hundreds who too believe that God is central and supreme in everything that is true, good, or beautiful and that this realization can begin with prayer, right prayer, and more of it.

In the spirit of these reaffirmations, we rededicate ourselves to the work of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. We need the continued help of our friends. We need more friends and more help. We solicit more advice and criticism for the improvement of the publication and the enlargement of the fellowship. During the last ten years there were many instances wherein God had spoken to us through such advice or criticism. Conscious of our own shortcomings, we know there is still much room for improvement.

Moreover, we acknowledge with humility and gratitude the generosity and good will of practically all of the critical comments communicated to us. During the ten years there was only a single case of merciless criticism, coming recently from a university president and saying in part: "Frankly, I do not agree with your doctrine, or your approach, or your philosophy and would not wish my name associated in any way with your publication.

"I do not believe Jesus Christ is a 'way-shower'—He declared Himself to be the Way. I believe the Virgin Birth is an essential doctrine. No man who is a Christian, that is, a born-again man with the life of God in him and a child of God by faith, would say it is unimportant or question the fact of the Virgin Birth.

"A creed is not a 'symbol' to any honest man. If he repeats it without believing it, he is a crook and a liar. Let me say quite frankly, I think your little paper is satanic calculated to cause men to be lost forever. I do not mean to say this unkindly, but I think nothing is more satanic than to attempt to use pious language while denying the veracity of the Word of God and the eternal and absolute deity of Jesus Christ as the only 'Begotten' and the discrediting of His shed blood as the only means of man's salvation."

It is perhaps appropriate to quote Abraham Lincoln: "With the fearful strain that is on me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die." »»»»

TRUE GREATNESS

The life of Abraham Lincoln is the answer to the question— "What constitutes true greatness?"

Lincoln was truly great because he was the composite of all the sublime qualities which combine to make true greatness. As a ray of pure white light, passing through a prism, is broken up into its component parts, which we call primary colors. So, when we analyze the life of Lincoln and subject it to the prism of experience, we find all these fundamental attributes, which have united to make Lincoln the outstanding exemplification of true greatness—humility, compassion, charity, kindness and gentleness, patience and long-suffering, loyalty, devotion, justice, magnanimity, mercy, faith, fortitude and forgiveness.

The life of Lincoln is an adaptation of Christ's new commandment, "That ye love one another as I have loved you."

It has been said that Abraham Lincoln was not a church man. Yet, Lincoln gave to the world, one of the greatest sermons ever preached in all world history and he gave it in eight simple words: "With malice toward none; with charity for all." Now, this is the very essence of all true religions. Lincoln might not have been a "church man," but he was a Godly man and that is the all-important thing that matters.

Lincoln's mind transcended the physical and functioned in the higher realm of thought, purpose and action; his heart beat in perfect unison with "The Great Divine Heart" which embraces and loves all and all alike.

We, the people of America, would do well to celebrate this, the one hundred and fifty-first anniversary of the birth of our beloved leader and friend—Abraham Lincoln—by withdrawing from the activities, the turmoil and confusion of this physical world and going into the secrecy of their own closet and meditate, in silence, upon the significance of true greatness, with a view to emulating Lincoln's ways, and to the end that we may all become better citizens, better men and women, and better friends of all mankind. To be a good American is a noble achievement; to expand our good will, to embrace all the peoples of God's glorious creation, is divine. That is the example Lincoln set us.

— Harry Halsey Starrett.

MARTHA AND MARY

By Henry Thomas Hamblin

The story of Martha and Mary, recorded in Luke: 10, 38-42, has been a stumbling-block to many. If one wants to be like Mary, then it seems that Martha's duties are selfishly neglected, and hardship is thrown upon other people. Therefore this cannot be right. On the other hand, if one becomes like Martha, immersed in worldly or domestic cares, and "cumbered about much serving," then the "good part" which our Lord commends seems to be lost to us, so that no blessing is attached to the work that we do with so much effort and striving.

Let us look into this quiet little story and see what its real meaning is.

Martha may be said to symbolise those who love the Lord, and who want to serve Him and also humanity, but who attempt to do so by self-effort. When they wake up in the morning they immediately become conscious of the many duties that call for their attention, and so they begin to think about them and long to get at them. Consequently they have no time for their private devotions, no time to give to the Lord, and no time for finding the Secret Place, where living contact could be made with their Divine Source.

The result is, that with all the good intentions possible, they yet start out to meet the day's experiences ill-equipped and lacking in power and wisdom. All that they do has to be done in their own strength; all their decisions have to be made in their own wisdom; and every rebuff and irritation has to be met with their own forbearance and love. Consequently they soon become exhausted, like a run-down battery. Life becomes hard and difficult; also, things begin to go awry. Then, because things become contrary, the Marthas are worried and strained, so that more exhaustion is the result, and this is followed by increasing strain, worry and disharmony.

The end of the day finds them tired, exhausted, nervy, disappointed and depressed, or even perhaps bad-tempered. Upon looking back on the day's duties it is seen that things have not been well done, that owing to mistakes or friction less has been accomplished than would have been the case if things had gone smoothly; and, finally, a bad impression may have been created in other people's minds, which is not

good either for their work or prospects. Finally, there remains the distressing fact that, through not being in tune with the Lord, they have failed to help others in the way they might have done, and that they even may have hurt or discouraged one of His "little ones."

In spite of the best possible intentions, and in spite of much effort and struggle, the day has not been the success that it might have been. At best it has been only a partial success, and that at the expense of much energy and vitality.

But cannot the day be retrieved by means of prayer? Yes. But surely prevention in this case is infinitely better than cure! Also, the general experience is that Martha is too tired and exhausted at the end of the day for prayer. If we fail to make contact with our Divine Source in the morning, when the mind is fresh and alert, it is not easy to do so at night, when the mind is tired and dull.

The Marthas find it very difficult to "stay their hasts" and "to make delays." They realise that they ought to do so. They know that if they could only become quiet in God their life would go much more smoothly. But they seem to be caught up in a swirl of duties, and their mind also is in a whirl of thoughts, so that the peace of God is far away.

We are all liable to become like Martha. The temptation to do so is ever present with us. If we give way to it, thus allowing ourselves to be caught up in the swirl of duties, or ambitions, or cares, and to think that we have not a moment to spare and hardly time even to breathe, then we lose our peace, and become cut off from our Divine Source.

How many of us, alas, are like this—trying so hard to serve the Lord and to be faithful in meeting the duties and responsibilities of life, without drawing upon the Divine Power available, so that we are in a constant state of exhaustion. We become, like Martha, "cumbered about much serving." Life's duties get on top of us, and become too much for us, and we wonder what is going to become of us.

Also, owing to the fact that we are cut off from the only Source of Peace and Poise and Harmony, we possess no inward peace, or poise, or harmony. Consequently this becomes reflected in our outward circumstances. "There is no peace for the wicked; they are like the troubled sea": so also is it the case with us if we cut ourselves off from our Divine

Source. The inward turmoil and disharmony find expression in an outward turmoil and disharmony. Things do not run smoothly. Trouble, difficulty, friction, annoyance, misunderstanding, incompatibility of temper—all are liable to arise through our being cut off from the One Source of Life, power, strength, peace and poise.

Now let us consider the case of Mary, "who sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word."

Mary may be said to symbolize those who daily practise the Silence, and who never let a day begin without first making contact with their Divine Source in the Secret Place. They may have just as much to do as the Marthas, or even more; but in spite of pressing duties and the temptation to get busy with mundane affairs without first establishing contact with their Divine Source, they never fail to seek God and become filled with His wisdom, love and power.

The Marthas, because they do not do this, are like run-down batteries or accumulators, which function after a fashion in a feeble way for a short time and then collapse. Their strength and patience are soon exhausted, and then they go all to pieces. The Marys, on the contrary, because they have been filled with power, like a battery that has been recharged, are able to do more work, and better work, than the Marthas, and to do so without fatigue or loss of calm and good temper. While the Marthas may become nervy and inclined to fly all to pieces if things apparently go awry, those of the Mary type, are, as usual, calm and poised, serene and undisturbed, no matter how trying the circumstances may be which confront them.

Because at the beginning of the day they have made living contact with God, their Source of Life and Power, they not only start upon their day's experiences filled with Divine life and power, but they are also able to fall back upon God whenever they meet with a situation or circumstance that otherwise would prove too big for them. A disappointment, a grief, a circumstance that would normally excite fear, an annoyance, an unkindness or injustice, a humiliating experience—any of these can be met victoriously, because instantaneously they can look within, realise the Truth, and know that they are children of Eternity, a part of God's perfect plan for each and all of them.

At the end of the day the

Marys find themselves unfatigued, still poised and serene, with the comforting and satisfying knowledge that they have accomplished better work and more work than would have been possible if they had not made contact with God, and relied on His hidden strength from time to time during the day.

We who may be Marthas by habit ask: "But how *can* I find time to wait upon God and make contact with Him, and condition my mind and thoughts, so that they act in unison with the mind and thoughts of God?"

The answer is: "By making the best use of the little time that we have." If we wait for circumstances to be perfectly convenient, and everything "just right" for meditation, then we shall never make any progress at all. Not only so, but we shall lose the small amount of opportunity that we now possess.

The law, as our Lord taught us, is that everything grows by use, but disappears by non-use. This is a law of nature as well as of the spirit. For instance, if we do not use our muscles they atrophy. If we were to live in perpetual darkness we should lose our eyes, and so on.

If we make use of the scraps of time which we have now, in turning to God and realising His presence and love and order, then more time will be given us; or we will find that we can practise the presence of God in our daily work, like Brother Lawrence did. If we do the best that we can to find God in the circumstances in which we find ourselves, then our ability to realise His presence is increased, so that we are able to see God everywhere and be in constant touch with the Divine Life, Wisdom, Love and Power.

Thus, like Mary, we are able to "sit at Jesus' feet," and enjoy "the good part," which shall not be taken away from us; and yet at the same time, and as a consequence of so doing, we may do as much work as ever we did when we were Marthas, and also do it better and with less fatigue.

And so Martha and Mary are no longer two separate individuals, but are two parts of a complete individual. Mary symbolises our interior life, which finds its springs in God, while Martha symbolises our outward activities with which we serve our fellows and our day and generation. Because our inward life is nourished by our Mary nature sitting at the feet of Jesus (in other words, by prayer and turning to God and realising His Presence), our outward

Martha-life is one of highest service, not merely because of its motive, but also because it is sustained by Invisible Power.

Because the Mary part of us is always in touch with the Lord we are able to fall back upon God and find strength and guidance in every circumstance that arises. When we are confronted by some disturbing experience, instead of meeting it with resentment, or being overcome by fear, or upset by giving way to annoyance, we inwardly realise our oneness with the Lord, instantly becoming composed, poised, balanced, and at peace with all men. Then we hold up the trouble for Divine guidance, and for a Divine adjustment to be made, at the same time going forward, doing what we know inwardly to be right rather than follow the path of least resistance. Through so doing we find ourselves on top of the experience, with everything working together sweetly and harmoniously, like a well-oiled machine.

Our Lord's teaching shows us how to live the victorious and serene life. But we have to practise it as well as understand it. He has promised that if we continue in His word then are we His disciples indeed, and we shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make us free.

The Mary part, of sitting at Jesus' feet, is also symbolic of that mysterious "action in inaction" in which the Divine action takes place, when everything is done although apparently no action takes place....

— THE QUEST
Through MIRA

We Thank Thee, Lord!

For peace of mind amid world strife;
For guidance on the road of life;
For daily blessings on us poured,
Accept our praise—we thank Thee, Lord!
For warmth, and light, in heart and soul,
With grace and strength to reach our goal,
For chance to ease another's load—
We bring deep gratitude to God!
For men who show real brotherhood,
And gracious, tender womanhood,
For all that brings us close to Thee—
Dear God, our thanks on bended knee!

— W. J. Thompson, D.D.

PRAYERS: FOR EACH HIS OWN

By Mildred Seydell

Several years ago there was a popular song called TO EACH HIS OWN. This title expresses my idea concerning prayer. Prayers that suit other people are sometimes distasteful to me. For instance, there are prayers that bargain—saying to God if You do this I'll do that or prayers that instruct God—telling Him what He should, or should not so.

A prayer that brings one in the closest communion with God, nearest the source of Divine Love, is the prayer best suited for the one who prays.

Such a prayer for me is short, silent and simple. Always it begins: *Thy Will Be Done*. Knowing that when I accept to be in harmony with *All Goodness* I am making my life count. I am inspired and strengthened. I no longer depend upon my own intelligence, but through prayer I connect with the one universal, all intelligent mind, God.

The prayer I make is short, but incessant, from waking hours to sleeping ones. Beginning all activities with a prayer followed by deep meditation on what I want to accomplish. I never pray for *things*, believing that God knows my needs better than I, and that He will graciously supply them. And so I give thanks for my blessings and open my heart and mind to receive instructions, which come to me through inspiration when I am truly humble and ready to obey, having attained this estate through silent prayers of faith.

I have found that when one prays to be able to do God's will rather than to have one's own personal desires satisfied prayer is answered gloriously! And though perhaps denied the things one has ardently wished for, one is given instead a peace and joy beyond the imagination of any selfish mind.

— From: WE BELIEVE IN PRAYER
Ed. By Lawrence M. Brings

A BUILDER

An old man travelling a lone highway
Came at the evening cold and gray
To a chasm deep and wide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
For the sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned when he reached the other side
And builded a bridge to span the tide.
"Old man," cried a fellow pilgrim near,
"You are wasting your strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the closing day
And you never again will pass this way.
You have crossed the chasm deep and wide,
Why build you a bridge at eventide?"
And the builder raised his old, gray head.
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followeth after me today
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This stream, which has been as naught to me
To that fair-headed boy may a pitfall be;
He too must cross in the twilight dim—
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him."

— W. A. Droomgoole
Sent in by Margaret M. Losey

Let us also offer tribute of deep gratitude to all Societies, Associations, Leagues, Parliaments of Religions, World-Fellowships of Faiths, which have been endeavoring to hold up before the world, the need and the possibility of reviving the sincere worship of that Spirit of Unity, (1) by educing more and more clearly, through sympathetic, deep, large-hearted and open-minded, comparative study of the Sacred Books of all religions, the Essential Unity running through all these religions, past and present, (2) by directing attention to the need for the study of the inner nature, as much as the outer, of the human being as such, and (3) by reuniting the peoples of all countries, without distinction of creed, caste, colour, race, or sex, in a Universal Brotherhood.

— *From: THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS*
By Bhagavān Dās, Benāres, 1932, 1947.

FATHER SKY AND MOTHER EARTH

As depicted by a Navajo Indian Medicine Man

The first creation of the Great Spirit was Father Sky and Mother Earth, from which all life sprang. The crossing of their hands and feet signifies the union of heaven and earth, bound eternally together by the Rainbow Guardian. Regardless of in which direction we may look, we find sky and earth fused as one on the horizon. The physical earth, and sky or mind (spiritual) must function together to produce, create, or give forth new life. All things are conceived first in thought before they become physical expressions or manifestations. This is the meaning of the line running from the head of Father Sky to the head of Mother Earth. Therefore much physical pain, disease, or so-called evil, was first conceived in thought before it appeared in the body. To cure or treat a patient, a poor crop, or other need, one must of necessity establish a harmonious rhythm with all the unknown forces: "Let the wind carry my voice to the four corners (four dots in the painting) up to the sky and down to the very center of Mother Earth."

The stars and the moon (sometimes the face of the sun appears also) and the constellations are shown on the body of Father Sky, and the zig-zags crossing his shoulders, arms and legs are the Milky Way.... From the bosom of Mother Earth radiates the life-given energy of the sun, bringing fertility to the womb of Mother Earth from whence springs the seeds of all living things....

Mineral, vegetable, and animal—these things grow, mature, bear fruit, and fall, returning back to the source (black oval at the base of Mother Earth and Father Sky). The mineral feeds the vegetable, the vegetable and the mineral feed the animal, the mineral eventually reclaims all three.

The four circles, in divisions of four, represent the four cardinal points of the compass, the four elements, the four seasons of the year, and the four ages of man: infancy, youth, maturity and transition.

The bat, the sacred messenger of the spirit of the night, guards the Sandpainting at the opening in its border. This is the easterly direction.

The small figure on the left is an astral medicine

ILLUSTRATION .FOR

By David V

R SANDPAINTING

Villaseñor

pouch deriving the power to heal from the constellations.

Surrounding the sandpainting on three sides, we find the Rainbow Guardian, and at each extremity there are five "fingers." Five are white and five are black. Black and white are symbols of night and day, man and woman, darkness and light, evil and goodness, positive and negative forces, birth and death—the pairs of opposites. This represents the paradox in which this planet, world, and all that is contained within must forever challenge each other, and especially man, so long as he is part of the earth vibration.

Excerpt from TAPESTRIES IN SAND by David V. Villaseñor.

* * *

The Story of Sandpainting . . .

The Indian knows that the Great Spirit is not bred into man alone but that the whole of the universe shares in an immortal perfection. The wealth of wisdom embodied in the ancient art and sacred ritual of Indian Sandpainting will equal, if not surpass, the very best in modern psychology. And yet is is so little known and understood.

At the age of sixteen, on the Navajo Reservation, David Villaseñor saw his first Sandpainting being made by a wise old Medicine Man for sacred ceremonial purposes. With a fired imagination he vowed that some day he would find a means of preserving the beauty of this ancient art, which is always done loosely upon the ground and destroyed within a twelve-hour period. The significance of the symbolism he felt even then. As a child, he knew that as he lay flat against the bosom of Mother Earth and watched the ever-changing expressions of Father Sky, all big troubles would become little ones.

The above two paragraphs and the illustration on the preceding two pages are excerpted from a printed folder available at Mr. Villaseñor's exhibits in several museums.

WHAT IS PRAYER

What is prayer? Prayer is outpouring of the heart. Prayer is offering flowers plucked from the garden of the heart. Prayer is the cry of the wounded heart to the Beloved. Prayer is the soul's ascent to the mount of vision.

This word, "prayer," means, literally, "asking." I recall the words of Jesus: "Ask and it shall be given to you." Prayer is asking for the key to the treasures of the Spirit-world. And I sometimes say prayer is a voyage of discovery. For, if you but know how to pray, you begin to discover a mighty world around you,— the Spirit-world.

The word for "prayer" in the Sanskrit language is *upasna*. The literal meaning of this word is "sitting under." That is prayer,— "sitting under" the influence of the Spirit.

Many years ago, when I was in England, one sweet little English girl came to me and said:— "Teach me what to pray." I said to her:— "My child! the Spirit alone may teach us what to pray." But she said:— "You must give me some words which I may recite every day!" And I passed on to her the words of an ancient Rishi:— "Out of darkness lead me into Light!" And I said to her:— "Recite these words and in silence meditate on their meaning."

I was a guest in the house of this girl. One day, I looked into a little room and I saw her sitting,— this sweet English girl,— and she was lisping the words:— "Out of darkness lead me into Light!" And she offered the prayer in such sincerity, with such love in her heart, I saw her face illuminated, her eyes aglow with light, and I said to myself:— "I have seen the Face of God!" True it is, that from time to time you see a person filled with the spirit of prayer, and gazing at his face you feel that you see the Face of God.

— T. L. Vaswani

From: EAST AND WEST SERIES

THE HERO IN HISTORY

By Rev. Roy Wallace Thomas

When it was suggested to me that I write something on "heroism" for the February issue of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. the inevitable process of word association could lead to only one name—Lincoln, of course.

Since Lord Charnwood's, the best one-volume life of Lincoln is, according to the consensus of competent critical opinion, certainly the one by Benjamin P. Thomas (not a relative of mine), published in 1952. Through Thomas' elaborately and carefully presented documents, it is entirely clear what caused Lincoln to leave a comfortable and prosperous law practice and re-enter politics.

By the time Abraham Lincoln was a little past the age of thirty, he had spent four successful terms as a frontier legislator in the Illinois statehouse, and had become a full-fledged lawyer. Later, during his one term as a member of Congress, he joined his fellow Whigs in condemning President Polk for bringing about an unjust war against our weak neighbor, Mexico. This act of courage so alienated the already martially-aroused voters of his district that it practically put an end to any chance of his being elected to an office. Reluctantly he returned to law.

Soon he became too much absorbed in a growing, successful practice, to maintain a personal interest in politics. For four years he rode the circuit, spring and fall, and loved the life of a lawyer immensely. But this did not mean settling down and being contented with routine and mediocrity. He was still moved by a profound desire expressed in one of his early addresses, "of being truly esteemed of my fellow men by rendering myself worthy of their esteem." As he rode from town to town in his buggy, he read and read, pursuing astronomy or mastering six books of Euclid, seeking always to improve his own mind.

To the knowledge gained from books he added wisdom received from observation and experience. Honesty was his outstanding characteristic in his law practice and social life. Next to honesty came his irrespressible wit and humor. He had no contemporary rival as a story teller and mimic. He neither smoked nor drank; yet, he was tolerant of his fellows in such matters. Though friendly and sociable by nature, he was, at times,

under the strain of a mysterious inner loneliness which made him appear solitary. But he never ceased to be a man of deep humility. Hence, he never stopped growing.

His former political fire was, however, not dead—it was merely banked. Portentous circumstances quickly fanned it to a blaze. The irresponsible conduct of Stephen A. Douglas in Washington stirred Lincoln and thoroughly aroused him. Senator Douglas fostered a policy that, Lincoln believed, threatened the very ideals which alone could make the nation great, and for which it stood. Douglas jammed through the Senate a bill opening the northwest to slavery, thus violating the Missouri Compromise, which was intended to be perpetual. Lincoln had always reasoned, "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong." Thus, what roused Lincoln from his prosperous and demanding legal practice was the greatest moral issue of the day.

The House foolishly concurred with the Senate in passing Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska Bill; Lincoln was stirred as never before. Three months later he was back in politics campaigning for the state legislature against the Douglas forces. "He spoke with new vision, new authority and new eloquence." He did not know it then, but he had set his feet in the path to the presidency. In his first speech he had pleaded, "Let us re-adopt the Declaration of Independence." This theme he stressed in his great debates with Douglas four years later, and at Cooper Union in 1860. He lost the race for the Senate, but he became President.

Throughout the war he identified the fate of the union with the fate of world democracy, and defined the cause of the nation in terms of world-wide human betterment. In his study of history he could find no parallel to the America he knew, where men from the lowly walks of life, by industry and integrity, could rise to the top of any profession. He prized the civil and religious liberty which the Founding Fathers had safe-guarded in the new republic. He found the true meaning of our republic in the Declaration of Independence, where Jefferson had dared to assert that all men are created equal and are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—an assertion that is as religiously significant as politically daring. it was in loyalty to these principles that he saw not only hope for his torn

nation bur also "hope for the world to all future time."

Dominant in him was his faith in the worth and goodness of common people such as those with whom he lived during his early life and on the judicial circuit. Inspired in youth by the life of George Washington as he read it lying on his back in the light of his fireplace, he was impressed most by the heroism of the common soldier. Although his life had been spent in the spacious countryside of the frontier and in small towns (Springfield, the state capitol, was a small town), he felt that these sparse communities of common people had been adequate social and political laboratories for observing democract at work. Despite its faults, which had frightened men like Hamilton, Lincoln believed that democracy was the best form of government, above the world horizon, for the good of man.

With great courage he fought for the right, as in his deep sincerity he saw it; and counted not the cost. His sense of right made him the foremost spokesman of American democracy. He was asked as President "to make a few appropriate remarks" at the dedication of the new cemetery at Gettysburg. Following two hours of eloquence by the most polished orator of the day, Lincoln stated in simple words destined to become immortal his definition of the democracy for which the nation stood and for which it fought: "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

MEDITATION

"I close my eyes to other people's imperfections, I see in them the Omnipresent Good. Within them dwells the Infinite Love and Perfection, and when I cast the beam out of my eye, I shall see more clearly, not my brother's faults, but his perfections. In all my fellows is the Infinite Love, henceforth I shall see it, and help to draw it forth. In everyone I shall see something to admire and reverence—something to love."

Book Review

LIFT UP YOUR EYES: The Religious Writings of Leo Tolstoy, published by Julian Press, New York. 1960. 581 pp. $5.95.

In reading the religious writings of Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), it is difficult to realize that these were written seventy-five years ago. One feels safe in saying that there have been almost no other western religious writers of the past hundred years or more who speak so much to our condition.

At the age of 42, Tolstoy had everything that a man of the world could want—family, position, fame, wealth...yet he felt an engulfing vacuum in his life. Although he was of a deeply religious nature, Tolstoy's "spiritual awakening"(which closely parallels the experience of St. Augustine, Blaise Pascal, George Fox, Lao Tse and the Buddha) did not occur until he was at this middle point of life. Then, through conviction by a realization of the "inward light," and under the influence of the Gospels, he became a changed man—an integrated individual with full realization of the wholeness and unity of man and of the meaning of love.

From an aristocrat among the top strata of Russian nobility and a world acclaimed artist among the literary intellectuals, Count Leo Tolstoy abandoned pomp and title and, adopting the garb of a peasant, first lived among the outcast poor of Moscow and then established and lived in a voluntary cooperative community with the poor and oppressed--on land which he donated for the purpose. His whole nature became centered, and he attained the strength of one who is an open hearted lover of humanity. He writes of the deep joy he found affirming in action "the truth of the path which has been revealed to me and on which I travel with ever greater joy the longer I live."

Having rejected the Russian Orthodox Church's conception of the Gospels and returned to the Greek originals in his search for an understanding of the meaning of life, he writes that he "... found in the Gospels an explanation of the meaning of life that perfectly satisfied me, one higher than anything I had known or could imagine... the light itself is of importance to me that it still shines upon me after 1800 years with undimmed brightness; but how to call it, or

of what it consist, or who gave it existence, is immaterial to me."

Tolstoy believed that the teachings of Jesus could not be understood under manifold interpretations—"for a great man is only great insofar as he expresses clearly what others have rendered incomprehensible." He demonstrated in his life the need to live truth in action, rather than merely verbalize—the mistake which so many sages have made. The illusion which he was ever on guard against is that of imagining that there is such a thing as absolute error as opposed to absolute truth, and that this absolute truth can be verbalized. He realized the impossibility of words, as opposed to action and experience, to avoid making this mistake.

Tolstoy found the main sum of Christ's teaching in a few words— "...that ye resist not evil" (Matthew 5:39) and he believed that the churches had emasculated Christianity by ignoring this major teaching. His study of the Gospels and the "speakings of the still small voice within" led him to the conclusion that war, the State and outward imposed authority, were all incompatible with the integral and unitary view of man which Jesus taught. Thus he became the apostle of simplicity, of renunciation of the animal personality in the service of others. Renunciation of worldly possessions in a spirit of voluntary poverty, and simultaneous renunciation of desire for fame became the prominent theme of his writings. His followers (one is tempted to find another word due to his thorough rejection of authoritarian concepts), learning by his lived example, likewise renounced possessions, refused service in the armed forces, refused to pay taxes, and lived in cooperative voluntary community much as is recorded of the early Christians in the Scriptural "Book of Acts." It was this Tolstoyan Christianity and communitarianism which later proved a decisive influence on Gandhi in India.

This great prophet—and the word is used without modification—believed that the salvation of the individual and of society lay in the integration of life through practice of love as taught by Jesus and all spiritual teachers. Now the change in society will take place he describes as follows: "This is what happens with societies of men when they pass from one understanding—and so from one organization—of life to another. At first people attain the new truth by the inward method and

follow it in life only gradually, and slowly, one by one. But after a certain stage of diffusion of truth, it is accepted by people no longer gradually or by the inward method, but suddenly and as it were involuntarily." The work of recent years in psychological research, particularly that done by C. G. Jung and Ira Progoff, bears out the validity of Tolstoy's analysis of societal changes as he expressed them nearly a century ago.

Tolstoy taught that the truly religious man is one "whose service consists in an ever-growing fulfillment of it in a movement toward perfection." In the latter part of his life Tolstoy truly personified this conception of religion. He was never content with himself as he was, but was always striving toward divine perfection.

Until the day of his death he continued his ever youthful search for more fully integrated truth.

Par excellence, the centre of his vision based on inward experience, and borne out in the teaching of Jesus, is that God is Love. He writes: "The doctrine of Christ is based on the metaphysical principle of love, the supreme law, that should guide us in our daily life snd which admits of no exception." We have it in us because of the indwelling "seed of God in every man." He maintained that where former doctrines had recommended love to everyone and returning good for evil, but insisted on them only for mystics not for all men, Jesus had given love as a supreme law, giving man an absolute rule of conduct, i.e. truth integrated into action. He adds: "It follows that the true life of each of us is a manifestation of love."

And as that love which is our true life becomes our way of living, working from the inward out, we shall more and more in self-forgetfulness take up the cross and follow Christ along the way of Agape and so realize the Kingdom of God—a just society, the universal brotherhood of man—on earth. That stream of love which, overflowing from the divine being that brought us all into being will, with us, mingle again with its source, "as a dewdrop in the shining sea."

Agape is the revelation of the Christ within and of Christianity itself - as Tolstoy showed - and Agape is love that seeketh not its own.

The Very Rev. Msgr. Mikhail Itkin, O.S.B.

Book Review

MAO CHEN-HSIANG CHUAN (a biography of Father John T. S. Mao) by Fan Yün-shih; published by Hein-wen tien-ti she, Hong Kong, 1956. iv, 202 pp. HK$4.00.

Though the Reverend John Mao's biography was published so long ago as November 1956, it was only a few weeks ago that I received a copy of it. To those interested in contemporary religious biographies who can read Chinese, it may be recommended as an informative and interesting book.

This little volume covers the life of Father Mao from his early youth through his education, both in China and Europe, his ordination as a priest, his services as Archbishop Yu Pin's secretary, his extensive travels, to his taking charge of a little church in a suburb of Taipei. When the book was published Father Mao was in his forty-fourth year. So, he is now still a young man.

Biographer Fan has quite a lively pen. There are many amusing incidents during young John's schooling which, despite some conflicts caused by youthful patriotism, did at last reward his natural talent, sense of mission, and perserverance with such degrees as Ph.D. and Th.D.

The most striking feature of Father Mao's services seems to be his idenfatigable efforts in finding several hundreds of Chinese boys and girls and placing them in a number of the Catholic colleges and universities in America, examining them, helping them to obtain the necessary passports and visas, school-admission certificates, and, in most cases, also scholarships and other financial aids. It is quite inspiring to note how he always keeps his students' interests at heart. For example; from May 1955 to June 1956 he was in America again mainly to visit his students scattered all over the United States. I translate from pages 175-176 of the biography:

"Apart from calling on the Chinese scholars in the various universities in America, John Mao went also to see the Chinese students confined in mental hospitals. After such visits, the condition of these students improved with extraordinary rapidity; some of them are now well and out of the hospitals. For instance, Chen-ying, who entered Rockland State Hospital in 1952, was quite seriously ill. Each time a visitor talked to him,

he just stared, grinned and did not answer. This spring when John went to see him, he was, at first, completely silent. The sight of his despondency and haggardness was almost unbearable. After several attempts to engage him in conversation were met with no success, John told him, 'Chen-ying I am Father Mao!' The patient only shook his head. Said John, 'Chen-ying, why won't you recognize even Father Mao?' Chen-ying then said, 'Father Mao is in Taiwan; were he here, I would not have become thus.' Said John, 'Yes, Chen-ying, I have come from Taiwan to see you.' The patient then opened his eyes wide, looked closely, and exclaimed, 'Oh Father, why has your hair all turned white?' said John, 'Because I am old.' The patient first laughed, and then said, 'Father, now that you have come, I want to leave the hospital.' Said John, 'You have to get stronger; eat plenty, sleep enough, and rest quietly; as soon as you are well, I'll come and take you out.' 'Oh well,' said the patient.

"John then inquired of the doctor about his case: How had he become so sick? And how much hope was there for his recovery? Said the doctor, 'It is hard to predict; at any rate, a long period is required.'

"The unexpected was that, immediately after seeing John, the patient bagan to show improvement on the same day. Now he is completely well and out of the hospital.

"Even more miraculous was the recovery of Miss Chang who wss a mental case in Norristown State Hospital. When John first saw her, he felt that her condition was quite serious; moreover, the doctor also told him that she would need a considerable long period of treatment. But, within the first week after seeing John she began to show happiness in spirit and her weight gained daily. When John saw her for the third time - exactly three weeks after the first visit - she was surely well and ready to leave the hospital. Now she is happily married to Mr. Yeh, a Chinese engineer."

It may be observed that exclusive reliance on self in the struggle to overcome frustration and loneliness is often apt to disrupt mental health. Thank God that these sick students could find in America kind and helpful hospitalization. However, it was in all probability the surrender to, and acceptance of, Divine power conveyed through love and friendship that must account for such speedy recovery. — *William Hung*

NOTICES and COMMENTS

BOARD MEETING. On February 3 the annual meeting of the Board of Fellowship in Prayer was held in New York. Among the highlights that gladdened our hearts were the attendance of Mrs. Thomas M. Taylor who had just arrived from Calvert, Texas and the coming of Mr. Gordon Belding from Beverly Hills, California. Mr. Belding, who is a business man, had on previous visits to the east, given us a great deal of invaluable voluntary help. At the meeting the Board elected him as another vice president. On his extensive travels, we are certain, he will be able to make many new friends for the fellowship.

Our Vice President, Professor Johnson, did not attend the meeting because he is recuperating in Spain following some surgery. We feel sure that many will join us in the prayer that he will soon regain his full strength and will continue to send us such good poems as have inspired so many readers in the past. Because of the heavy load of business duties and other commitments, Miss Wright presented her resignation as a trustee; the Board accepted it upon the assurance of her continued interest in, and support of, the movement.

THE VOICE. THE VOICE UNIVERSAL, a quarterly with editorial offices at 8 Watling Road, Southwick, Brighton, Sussex, England (annual subscription 3s. 8d. or $1.00), is so gracious as to publish in its number 32, page 9, a generous commendation of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, saying among other things: "It contains articles, prayers and poetry by authors representing all the great religions and cannot fail to produce a closer relationship to Almighty God—by whatsoever name you may call Him—and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

"By its irresistible appeal—even to the most orthodox in the West—this journal must make a tremendous contribution towards broadening the vision of all who read it... Take out a subscription for those around you who have been prevented to date from seeing the universality of all truth."

We are profoundly grateful for such a wholehearted endorsement from such a worthy contemporary group. What is quoted from the above paragraphs, as a matter of fact, could be more deservedly applied to THE VOICE UNIVERSAL, which covers re-

ally a wider range of interest than our own and the numerous items in which are generally presented with greater skill. It has been said of THE VOICE: "This new age friendship newspaper presents the voice and vision of truth and brotherhood. Its purpose is intended to promote the spirit of good will, right fraternal relationship and understanding, thereby invoking spiritual upliftment and joy throughout the world." May God give it strength and growth in influence.

WORLD PRAYER DAY. Once more we call attention to the date of World Prayer Day, which falls this year on March 4. This special day might not have special significance to our prayerful readers who are in the habit of praying daily—indeed some may be in the habit of praying every moment of the day. However, it may be well to remember the date for some of those never having the experience of prayer might be encouraged to start it in the consciousness of having a share in a very large company.

CONTRIBUTORS. It is most gratifying to receive Mr. Harry Halsey Starrett's enthusiastic commendation of the humble efforts of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, as given on page 1 of this issue, and his wholehearted identification of himself with it. A fortnight ago, another fellowship friend had the kindness of sending to our office a snapshot which she took of Mr. Starrett recently. We are amazed to find such a good looking, vigorous and healthful picture of an octogenarian gentleman. Surely, God takes care of his own. Mr. Starrett's and the Reverend Roy Wallace Thomas' articles on Lincoln we regard as excellent for this issue as the great emancipator's birthday falls in February. Among the contributors, the new ones in this issue are The Very Rev. Msgr. Mikhail Itkin, O. S.B., who is the Episcopal Administrator of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Western Orthodox Church; the Rev. Dr. Robert M. Bartlett of the First Congregational Church, Shrewsbury, Mass.; and Mr. David Villaseñor, lecturer and author on American Indian art and religion. We thank these gentlemen for permitting us to transmit their inspiring messages.

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BROTHERHOOD PRAYER

O Thou who hast been worshiped under many names and rites through the centuries, we recognize thee as the Father of all nations and races.

We thank thee for the prophets who have taught us that we should dwell together in brotherhood.

Forgive us for our failures to live according to their ideals, for ignorance of other religions that causes us to look upon them with superiority or scorn, for the prejudice that impels us to dislike those who differ from us, for the antipathies of creed that divide us.

As we reflect upon the years that have passed, shame and sorrow overcome us. The strife and destruction that have resulted because of our unwillingness to understand thy universal truths rise up to rebuke us.

Grant us power to join hearts and hands, disregarding barriers of class, creed and color, and to labor together to overcome ignorance, disease, poverty, prejudice and violence.

Help us to cease wrangling over trivialities and emphasizing divergencies, when we should be one with comrades of good will in all lands, working for human freedom and cooperation. Amen.

— Robert M. Bartlett

From THE PULPIT, October 1959

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